

Japji Sahib

English Translation

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One Universal Creator God. The Name Is Truth.
Creative Being Personified. No Fear. No Hatred.
Image Of The Undying, Beyond Birth, Self-
Existent. By Guru's Grace ~

Chant And Meditate:

True In The Primal Beginning. True Throughout
The Ages.

True Here And Now. O Nanak, Forever And Ever
True. ||1||

By thinking, He cannot be reduced to thought,
even by thinking hundreds of thousands of times.

By remaining silent, inner silence is not obtained,
even by remaining lovingly absorbed deep within.

The hunger of the hungry is not appeased, even
by piling up loads of worldly goods.

Hundreds of thousands of clever tricks, but not
even one of them will go along with you in the
end.

So how can you become truthful? And how can the veil of illusion be torn away?

O Nanak, it is written that you shall obey the Hukam of His Command, and walk in the Way of His Will. ||1||

By His Command, bodies are created; His Command cannot be described.

By His Command, souls come into being; by His Command, glory and greatness are obtained.

By His Command, some are high and some are low; by His Written Command, pain and pleasure are obtained.

Some, by His Command, are blessed and forgiven; others, by His Command, wander aimlessly forever.

Everyone is subject to His Command; no one is beyond His Command.

O Nanak, one who understands His Command, does not speak in ego. ||2||

Some sing of His Power—who has that Power?

Some sing of His Gifts, and know His Sign and Insignia.

Some sing of His Glorious Virtues, Greatness and Beauty.

Some sing of knowledge obtained of Him, through difficult philosophical studies.

Some sing that He fashions the body, and then again reduces it to dust.

Some sing that He takes life away, and then again restores it.

Some sing that He seems so very far away.

Some sing that He watches over us, face to face, ever-present.

There is no shortage of those who preach and teach.

Millions upon millions offer millions of sermons and stories.

The Great Giver keeps on giving, while those who receive grow weary of receiving.

Throughout the ages, consumers consume.

The Commander, by His Command, leads us to walk on the Path.

O Nanak, He blossoms forth, Carefree and
Untroubled. ||3||

True is the Master, True is His Name-speak it
with infinite love.

People beg and pray, "Give to us, give to us", and
the Great Giver gives His Gifts.

So what offering can we place before Him, by
which we might see the Darbaar of His Court?

What words can we speak to evoke His Love?

In the Amrit Vaylaa, the ambrosial hours before
dawn, chant the True Name, and contemplate His
Glorious Greatness.

By the karma of past actions, the robe of this
physical body is obtained. By His Grace, the Gate
of Liberation is found.

O Nanak, know this well: the True One Himself is
All. ||4||

He cannot be established, He cannot be created.

He Himself is Immaculate and Pure.

Those who serve Him are honored.

O Nanak, sing of the Lord, the Treasure of Excellence.

Sing, and listen, and let your mind be filled with love.

Your pain shall be sent far away, and peace shall come to your home.

The Guru's Word is the Sound-current of the Naad; the Guru's Word is the Wisdom of the Vedas; the Guru's Word is all-pervading.

The Guru is Shiva, the Guru is Vishnu and Brahma; the Guru is Paarvati and Lakhshmi.

Even knowing God, I cannot describe Him; He cannot be described in words.

The Guru has given me this one understanding:

there is only the One, the Giver of all souls. May I never forget Him! ||5||

If I am pleasing to Him, then that is my pilgrimage and cleansing bath. Without pleasing Him, what good are ritual cleansings?

I gaze upon all the created beings: without the karma of good actions, what are they given to receive?

Within the mind are gems, jewels and rubies, if
you listen to the Guru's Teachings, even once.

The Guru has given me this one understanding:

there is only the One, the Giver of all souls. May
I never forget Him! ||6||

Even if you could live throughout the four ages,
or even ten times more,

and even if you were known throughout the nine
continents and followed by all,

with a good name and reputation, with praise and
fame throughout the world-

still, if the Lord does not bless you with His
Glance of Grace, then who cares? What is the
use?

Among worms, you would be considered a lowly
worm, and even contemptible sinners would hold
you in contempt.

O Nanak, God blesses the unworthy with virtue,
and bestows virtue on the virtuous.

No one can even imagine anyone who can bestow
virtue upon Him. ||7||

Listening-the Siddhas, the spiritual teachers, the heroic warriors, the yogic masters.

Listening-the earth, its support and the Akaashic ethers.

Listening-the oceans, the lands of the world and the nether regions of the underworld.

Listening-Death cannot even touch you.

O Nanak, the devotees are forever in bliss.

Listening-pain and sin are erased. ||8||

Listening-Shiva, Brahma and Indra.

Listening-even foul-mouthed people praise Him.

Listening-the technology of Yoga and the secrets of the body.

Listening-the Shaastras, the Simritees and the Vedas.

O Nanak, the devotees are forever in bliss.

Listening-pain and sin are erased. ||9||

Listening-truth, contentment and spiritual wisdom.

Listening-take your cleansing bath at the sixty-eight places of pilgrimage.

Listening-reading and reciting, honor is obtained.

Listening-intuitively grasp the essence of meditation.

O Nanak, the devotees are forever in bliss.

Listening-pain and sin are erased. ||10||

Listening-dive deep into the ocean of virtue.

Listening-the Shaykhs, religious scholars, spiritual teachers and emperors.

Listening-even the blind find the Path.

Listening-the Unreachable comes within your grasp.

O Nanak, the devotees are forever in bliss.

Listening-pain and sin are erased. ||11||

The state of the faithful cannot be described.

One who tries to describe this shall regret the attempt.

No paper, no pen, no scribe

can record the state of the faithful.

Such is the Name of the Immaculate Lord.

Only one who has faith comes to know such a state of mind. ||12||

The faithful have intuitive awareness and intelligence.

The faithful know about all worlds and realms.

The faithful shall never be struck across the face.

The faithful do not have to go with the Messenger of Death.

Such is the Name of the Immaculate Lord.

Only one who has faith comes to know such a state of mind. ||13||

The path of the faithful shall never be blocked.

The faithful shall depart with honor and fame.

The faithful do not follow empty religious rituals.

The faithful are firmly bound to the Dharma.

Such is the Name of the Immaculate Lord.

Only one who has faith comes to know such a state of mind. ||14||

The faithful find the Door of Liberation.

The faithful uplift and redeem their family and relations.

The faithful are saved, and carried across with the Sikhs of the Guru.

The faithful, O Nanak, do not wander around begging.

Such is the Name of the Immaculate Lord.

Only one who has faith comes to know such a state of mind. ||15||

The chosen ones, the self-elect, are accepted and approved.

The chosen ones are honored in the Court of the Lord.

The chosen ones look beautiful in the courts of kings.

The chosen ones meditate single-mindedly on the Guru.

No matter how much anyone tries to explain and describe them,

the actions of the Creator cannot be counted.

The mythical bull is Dharma, the son of compassion;

this is what patiently holds the earth in its place.

One who understands this becomes truthful.

What a great load there is on the bull!

So many worlds beyond this world-so very many!

What power holds them, and supports their weight?

The names and the colors of the assorted species of beings

were all inscribed by the Ever-flowing Pen of God.

Who knows how to write this account?

Just imagine what a huge scroll it would take!

What power! What fascinating beauty!

And what gifts! Who can know their extent?

You created the vast expanse of the Universe
with One Word!

Hundreds of thousands of rivers began to flow.

How can Your Creative Potency be described?

I cannot even once be a sacrifice to You.

Whatever pleases You is the only good done,

You, Eternal and Formless One! ||16||

Countless meditations, countless loves.

Countless worship services, countless austere
disciplines.

Countless scriptures, and ritual recitations of
the Vedas.

Countless Yogis, whose minds remain detached
from the world.

Countless devotees contemplate the Wisdom and
Virtues of the Lord.

Countless the holy, countless the givers.

Countless heroic spiritual warriors, who bear the
brunt of the attack in battle (who with their
mouths eat steel).

Countless silent sages, vibrating the String of
His Love.

How can Your Creative Potency be described?

I cannot even once be a sacrifice to You.

Whatever pleases You is the only good done,

You, Eternal and Formless One. ||17||

Countless fools, blinded by ignorance.

Countless thieves and embezzlers.

Countless impose their will by force.

Countless cut-throats and ruthless killers.

Countless sinners who keep on sinning.

Countless liars, wandering lost in their lies.

Countless wretches, eating filth as their ration.

Countless slanderers, carrying the weight of
their stupid mistakes on their heads.

Nanak describes the state of the lowly.

I cannot even once be a sacrifice to You.

Whatever pleases You is the only good done,

You, Eternal and Formless One. ||18||

Countless names, countless places.

Inaccessible, unapproachable, countless celestial realms.

Even to call them countless is to carry the weight on your head.

From the Word, comes the Naam; from the Word, comes Your Praise.

From the Word, comes spiritual wisdom, singing the Songs of Your Glory.

From the Word, come the written and spoken words and hymns.

From the Word, comes destiny, written on one's forehead.

But the One who wrote these Words of Destiny- no words are written on His Forehead.

As He ordains, so do we receive.

The created universe is the manifestation of Your Name.

Without Your Name, there is no place at all.

How can I describe Your Creative Power?

I cannot even once be a sacrifice to You.

Whatever pleases You is the only good done,

You, Eternal and Formless One. ||19||

When the hands and the feet and the body are
dirty,

water can wash away the dirt.

When the clothes are soiled and stained by urine,
soap can wash them clean.

But when the intellect is stained and polluted by
sin,

it can only be cleansed by the Love of the Name.

Virtue and vice do not come by mere words;

actions repeated, over and over again, are
engraved on the soul.

You shall harvest what you plant.

O Nanak, by the Hukam of God's Command, we
come and go in reincarnation. ||20||

Pilgrimages, austere discipline, compassion and
charity

-these, by themselves, bring only an iota of merit.

Listening and believing with love and humility in your mind,

cleanse yourself with the Name, at the sacred shrine deep within.

All virtues are Yours, Lord, I have none at all.

Without virtue, there is no devotional worship.

I bow to the Lord of the World, to His Word, to Brahma the Creator.

He is Beautiful, True and Eternally Joyful.

What was that time, and what was that moment?
What was that day, and what was that date?

What was that season, and what was that month,
when the Universe was created?

The Pandits, the religious scholars, cannot find that time, even if it is written in the Puraanas.

That time is not known to the Qazis, who study the Koran.

The day and the date are not known to the Yogis, nor is the month or the season.

The Creator who created this creation-only He Himself knows.

How can we speak of Him? How can we praise Him? How can we describe Him? How can we know Him?

O Nanak, everyone speaks of Him, each one wiser than the rest.

Great is the Master, Great is His Name.
Whatever happens is according to His Will.

O Nanak, one who claims to know everything shall not be decorated in the world hereafter. ||21||

There are nether worlds beneath nether worlds,
and hundreds of thousands of heavenly worlds above.

The Vedas say that you can search and search for them all, until you grow weary.

The scriptures say that there are 18,000 worlds,
but in reality, there is only One Universe.

If you try to write an account of this, you will surely finish yourself before you finish writing it.

O Nanak, call Him Great! He Himself knows Himself. ||22||

The praisers praise the Lord, but they do not obtain intuitive understanding

-the streams and rivers flowing into the ocean do not know its vastness.

Even kings and emperors, with mountains of property and oceans of wealth

-these are not even equal to an ant, who does not forget God. ||23||

Endless are His Praises, endless are those who speak them.

Endless are His Actions, endless are His Gifts.

Endless is His Vision, endless is His Hearing.

His limits cannot be perceived. What is the Mystery of His Mind?

The limits of the created universe cannot be perceived.

Its limits here and beyond cannot be perceived.

Many struggle to know His limits,

but His limits cannot be found.

No one can know these limits.

The more you say about them, the more there
still remains to be said.

Great is the Master, High is His Heavenly Home.

Highest of the High, above all is His Name.

Only one as Great and as High as God

can know His Lofty and Exalted State.

Only He Himself is that Great. He Himself knows
Himself.

O Nanak, by His Glance of Grace, He bestows His
Blessings. ||24||

His Blessings are so abundant that there can be
no written account of them.

The Great Giver does not hold back anything.

There are so many great, heroic warriors begging
at the Door of the Infinite Lord.

So many contemplate and dwell upon Him, that
they cannot be counted.

So many waste away to death engaged in
corruption.

So many take and take again, and then deny
receiving.

So many foolish consumers keep on consuming.

So many endure distress, deprivation and constant abuse.

Even these are Your Gifts, O Great Giver!

Liberation from bondage comes only by Your Will.

No one else has any say in this.

If some fool should presume to say that he does,
he shall learn, and feel the effects of his folly.

He Himself knows, He Himself gives.

Few, very few are those who acknowledge this.

One who is blessed to sing the Praises of the Lord,

O Nanak, is the king of kings. ||25||

Priceless are His Virtues, Priceless are His Dealings.

Priceless are His Dealers, Priceless are His Treasures.

Priceless are those who come to Him, Priceless are those who buy from Him.

Priceless is Love for Him, Priceless is absorption into Him.

Priceless is the Divine Law of Dharma, Priceless is the Divine Court of Justice.

Priceless are the scales, priceless are the weights.

Priceless are His Blessings, Priceless is His Banner and Insignia.

Priceless is His Mercy, Priceless is His Royal Command.

Priceless, O Priceless beyond expression!

Speak of Him continually, and remain absorbed in His Love.

The Vedas and the Puraanas speak.

The scholars speak and lecture.

Brahma speaks, Indra speaks.

The Gopis and Krishna speak.

Shiva speaks, the Siddhas speak.

The many created Buddhas speak.

The demons speak, the demi-gods speak.

The spiritual warriors, the heavenly beings, the
silent sages, the humble and serviceful speak.

Many speak and try to describe Him.

Many have spoken of Him over and over again,
and have then arisen and departed.

If He were to create as many again as there
already are,

even then, they could not describe Him.

He is as Great as He wishes to be.

O Nanak, the True Lord knows.

If anyone presumes to describe God,

he shall be known as the greatest fool of fools!

||26||

Where is that Gate, and where is that Dwelling,
in which You sit and take care of all?

The Sound-current of the Naad vibrates there,
and countless musicians play on all sorts of
instruments there.

So many Ragas, so many musicians singing there.

The praanic wind, water and fire sing; the
Righteous Judge of Dharma sings at Your Door.

Chitr and Gupt, the angels of the conscious and the subconscious who record actions, and the Righteous Judge of Dharma who judges this record sing.

Shiva, Brahma and the Goddess of Beauty, ever adorned, sing.

Indra, seated upon His Throne, sings with the deities at Your Door.

The Siddhas in Samaadhi sing; the Saadhus sing in contemplation.

The celibates, the fanatics, the peacefully accepting and the fearless warriors sing.

The Pandits, the religious scholars who recite the Vedas, with the supreme sages of all the ages, sing.

The Mohinis, the enchanting heavenly beauties who entice hearts in this world, in paradise, and in the underworld of the subconscious sing.

The celestial jewels created by You, and the sixty-eight holy places of pilgrimage sing.

The brave and mighty warriors sing; the spiritual heroes and the four sources of creation sing.

The planets, solar systems and galaxies, created
and arranged by Your Hand, sing.

They alone sing, who are pleasing to Your Will.
Your devotees are imbued with the Nectar of
Your Essence.

So many others sing, they do not come to mind. O
Nanak, how can I consider them all?

That True Lord is True, Forever True, and True
is His Name.

He is, and shall always be. He shall not depart,
even when this Universe which He has created
departs.

He created the world, with its various colors,
species of beings, and the variety of Maya.

Having created the creation, He watches over it
Himself, by His Greatness.

He does whatever He pleases. No order can be
issued to Him.

He is the King, the King of kings, the Supreme
Lord and Master of kings. Nanak remains subject
to His Will. ||27||

Make contentment your ear-rings, humility your begging bowl, and meditation the ashes you apply to your body.

Let the remembrance of death be the patched coat you wear, let the purity of virginity be your way in the world, and let faith in the Lord be your walking stick.

See the brotherhood of all mankind as the highest order of Yogis; conquer your own mind, and conquer the world.

I bow to Him, I humbly bow.

The Primal One, the Pure Light, without beginning, without end. Throughout all the ages, He is One and the Same. ||28||

Let spiritual wisdom be your food, and compassion your attendant. The Sound-current of the Naad vibrates in each and every heart.

He Himself is the Supreme Master of all; wealth and miraculous spiritual powers, and all other external tastes and pleasures, are all like beads on a string.

Union with Him, and separation from Him, come by His Will. We come to receive what is written in our destiny.

I bow to Him, I humbly bow.

The Primal One, the Pure Light, without beginning, without end. Throughout all the ages, He is One and the Same. ||29||

The One Divine Mother conceived and gave birth to the three deities.

One, the Creator of the World; One, the Sustainer; and One, the Destroyer.

He makes things happen according to the Pleasure of His Will. Such is His Celestial Order.

He watches over all, but none see Him. How wonderful this is!

I bow to Him, I humbly bow.

The Primal One, the Pure Light, without beginning, without end. Throughout all the ages, He is One and the Same. ||30||

On world after world are His Seats of Authority and His Storehouses.

Whatever was put into them, was put there once and for all.

Having created the creation, the Creator Lord watches over it.

O Nanak, True is the Creation of the True Lord.

I bow to Him, I humbly bow.

The Primal One, the Pure Light, without
beginning, without end. Throughout all the ages,
He is One and the Same. ||31||

If I had 100,000 tongues, and these were then
multiplied twenty times more, with each tongue,

I would repeat, hundreds of thousands of times,
the Name of the One, the Lord of the Universe.

Along this path to our Husband Lord, we climb
the steps of the ladder, and come to merge with
Him.

Hearing of the etheric realms, even worms long
to come back home.

O Nanak, by His Grace He is obtained. False are
the boastings of the false. ||32||

No power to speak, no power to keep silent.

No power to beg, no power to give.

No power to live, no power to die.

No power to rule, with wealth and occult mental
powers.

No power to gain intuitive understanding,
spiritual wisdom and meditation.

No power to find the way to escape from the
world.

He alone has the Power in His Hands. He watches
over all.

O Nanak, no one is high or low. ||33||

Nights, days, weeks and seasons;

wind, water, fire and the nether regions

-in the midst of these, He established the earth
as a home for Dharma.

Upon it, He placed the various species of beings.

Their names are uncounted and endless.

By their deeds and their actions, they shall be
judged.

God Himself is True, and True is His Court.

There, in perfect grace and ease, sit the self-
elect, the self-realized Saints.

They receive the Mark of Grace from the
Merciful Lord.

The ripe and the unripe, the good and the bad,
shall there be judged.

O Nanak, when you go home, you will see this.
||34||

This is righteous living in the realm of Dharma.

And now we speak of the realm of spiritual
wisdom.

So many winds, waters and fires; so many
Krishnas and Shivas.

So many Brahmas, fashioning forms of great
beauty, adorned and dressed in many colors.

So many worlds and lands for working out karma.
So very many lessons to be learned!

So many Indras, so many moons and suns, so many
worlds and lands.

So many Siddhas and Buddhas, so many Yogic
masters. So many goddesses of various kinds.

So many demi-gods and demons, so many silent
sages. So many oceans of jewels.

So many ways of life, so many languages. So many
dynasties of rulers.

So many intuitive people, so many selfless
servants. O Nanak, His limit has no limit! ||35||

In the realm of wisdom, spiritual wisdom reigns
supreme.

The Sound-current of the Naad vibrates there,
amidst the sounds and the sights of bliss.

In the realm of humility, the Word is Beauty.

Forms of incomparable beauty are fashioned
there.

These things cannot be described.

One who tries to speak of these shall regret the
attempt.

The intuitive consciousness, intellect and
understanding of the mind are shaped there.

The consciousness of the spiritual warriors and
the Siddhas, the beings of spiritual perfection,
are shaped there. ||36||

In the realm of karma, the Word is Power.

No one else dwells there,

except the warriors of great power, the spiritual
heroes.

They are totally fulfilled, imbued with the Lord's Essence.

Myriads of Sitas are there, cool and calm in their majestic glory.

Their beauty cannot be described.

Neither death nor deception comes to those,
within whose minds the Lord abides.

The devotees of many worlds dwell there.

They celebrate; their minds are imbued with the True Lord.

In the realm of Truth, the Formless Lord abides.

Having created the creation, He watches over it.
By His Glance of Grace, He bestows happiness.

There are planets, solar systems and galaxies.

If one speaks of them, there is no limit, no end.

There are worlds upon worlds of His Creation.

As He commands, so they exist.

He watches over all, and contemplating the creation, He rejoices.

O Nanak, to describe this is as hard as steel!
||37||

Let self-control be the furnace, and patience the
goldsmith.

Let understanding be the anvil, and spiritual
wisdom the tools.

With the Fear of God as the bellows, fan the
flames of tapa, the body's inner heat.

In the crucible of love, melt the Nectar of the
Name,

and mint the True Coin of the Shabad, the Word
of God.

Such is the karma of those upon whom He has
cast His Glance of Grace.

O Nanak, the Merciful Lord, by His Grace, uplifts
and exalts them. ||38||

Shalok:

Air is the Guru, Water is the Father, and Earth
is the Great Mother of all.

Day and night are the two nurses, in whose lap all
the world is at play.

Good deeds and bad deeds-the record is read out
in the Presence of the Lord of Dharma.

According to their own actions, some are drawn
closer, and some are driven farther away.

Those who have meditated on the Naam, the
Name of the Lord, and departed after having
worked by the sweat of their brows

-O Nanak, their faces are radiant in the Court of
the Lord, and many are saved along with them!
||1||